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SUBJECT: Guatemalan Communist Party Calls for a Strengthened "National Democratic Front."

The Central Committee of the Communist Partido Guatemalteco del Trabajo (PGT) at its fall Plenary Session on October 16-18 addressed a manifesto to the people of Guatemala calling for the establishment of a "National Democratic Front" composed not only of the Administration parties but also of the labor and "mass" organizations which support the present Guatemalan Administration. The manifesto was based on the report to the Central Committee by Sr. José Manuel FORTUNY, the PGT Secretary General, and its theme is that a front broadly based on the people could successfully "repulse foreign intervention, resist the pressure of American imperialism on our country, and overcome the opposition of the feudal landowners, the great pro-imperialist merchants, and their hirelings." A translation of the manifesto is enclosed.

The appeal for broadening the "National Democratic Front" is an extension of the "popular front" tactic which the Communists have employed in Guatemala ever since their party came into the open after President Arbenz's inauguration in March, 1951. This appeal was launched at a time when the existing "National Democratic Front," consisting of the Partido Acción Revolucionaria (PAR), the Partido de la Revolución Guatemalteca (PRG), the Renovación Nacional (RN) and the PGT, has been shaken by internal dissension in the PAR and the PRG (Embassy Despatch 333, October 16). Moreover, the existing front is apparently a reality only at the participating parties' national headquarters in Guatemala City since preparations for the municipal elections scheduled for late November have revealed considerable division and friction between the Administration parties outside the capital.

The PGT's proposal is thus in essence a proposal to strengthen the weakened "Democratic National Front." The Communists would formally incorporate into it the Communist-controlled Confederación General de Trabajadores de Guatemala (CGTG), the Confederación Nacional Campesina de Guatemala (CNCG), both of which have been informally participating in the Front's

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meetings. They would also add unstated "peoples" and "mass" organizations by which they presumably mean the Alianza de la Juventud Democrática de Guatemala (AJDG), the Alianza Femenina Guatemalteca (AFG) and similar Communist-front organizations. Such a revitalized and enlarged "National Democratic Front," if it became effective, would tend to put the PGT in a stronger position among Administration supporters than hitherto since its control or influence in the labor and "mass" organizations and its ideological pre-eminence would tend more than ever to overweigh moderate currents in the Administration parties.

The Communist Tribuna Popular has not yet published the text of Sr. Fortuny's report or other documents used in connection with the Plenary Session.

William L. Krieg
Chargé d'Affaires a.i.

Enclosure

√Translation

MANIFESTO OF PGT (Tribuna Popular, October 20, 1953)

United Mass Front! To Further the Revolution and Reject Intervention

People of Guatemala:

The Central Committee of the Guatemalan Labor Party, meeting from the 16th to the 18th of this month, heard a report on the national situation, the growing threats of foreign intervention and the need to broaden, strengthen and further increase the unity of all democratic and patriotic forces in Guatemala in order to hasten the realization of the revolutionary movement's goals toward raising the standard of living of the nation and toward national independence.

After the nine years which have elapsed since the beginning of the revolutionary movement in our country--on the anniversary of the glorious October 20, 1944--the nation can appreciate the important conquests already won. The workers, the peasants, the small businessmen and industrialists, have benefited from the revolutionary movement, their incomes have grown, they enjoy full democratic liberties under whose shelter they can defend their interests, and they can rely on a Government which maintains its concern for the adoption and application of those measures which are needed for the independent economic development of Guatemala. The country is at this moment passing through the historic days of agrarian reform which is liberating the peasants from feudal oppression and will bring about a considerable increase in the income of the rural population opening the way for great possibilities in the development of national industry and, hence, the elevation of the standard of living of the workers, the middle class and the entire nation.

Day by day the terrible years of the Ubico dictatorship recede further; the dictatorship which, in the name of the feudal landowners and the foreign companies, oppressed the nation for more than 14 years, stifling in the anti-Communist banner the last shred of democratic freedom.

In these few years many important conquests have been won for the popular masses and for democratic progress and the national economy. Nevertheless, there are still fundamental objectives to be attained for Guatemala's independent economic development and the country's full national independence, such as the complete liquidation of feudalism in the rural areas, the alloting of land to all peasants and the development of their economy through credit and technical assistance from the State, the repossession of Guatemalan wealth and resources now in the hands of foreign companies, etc.

All that has been won--and that which remains to be won--has met with obstinate and at times violent resistance from the minorities which for centuries have oppressed and drained the country as they pleased. With their eyes turned toward the past, the reactionary minority--which has powerful resources at its disposal however--time and again prepares to assault and launch a fatal blow against the entire revolutionary movement. The principal actors in this reactionary conspiracy are the foreign companies, with the United Fruit Company at the center of those who wish to keep our national sovereignty in the pockets of their wealthy stockholders.

The enemies of our people and of Guatemala are imperialism and feudalism, against which the revolutionary movement directed its drive, begun nine years ago. In the face of the firm steps taken by the people and by the Government of President Arbenz in the last years, the feudal-imperialist reactionaries have redoubled their conspiratory and interventionist activities. It is an undeniable fact, as becomes clearer every day, that a vast conspiracy is on the march against Guatemala. In this conspiracy are to be found, up to their necks, Fascist leaders disguised as anti-Communists, real traitors to the Nation, renegades and sellers of their country; and the reactionary government circles of certain Central American and Caribbean countries who act as servants and mercenaries of North American imperialism, hopeful of intervening in Guatemala to liquidate the young and active democracy which by its example is sowing seeds of hope among oppressed peoples.

Should the international and local conspiracy against the revolutionary movement in Guatemala be successful, the nation would be subjected to unprecedented repression and to the unleashing of a feudal-imperialist reaction which would crush democratic organizations in blood and fire, seize the land from the peasants and turn the country over to the voracity of the foreign monopolists as Estrada Cabrera and Ubico did in their time. The people must defend not only the achievements but the future of the revolutionary movement and the honor and independence of the nation!

Can this patriotic undertaking be successful? Definitely. It is possible to repulse foreign intervention successfully, to resist the pressure of North American imperialism over our country, to meet the opposition of the feudal landowners and their hirelings of all stripes. Up to now it has been possible to advance because the democratic political parties and the social and popular organizations have been in agreement and have fought together. UNITY OF ACTION IS THE WAY! Acting together the workers have won better salaries; acting together the workers and the peasants, leading all the democratic forces, have achieved the promulgation of the Agrarian Reform Law and are carrying it

out with growing enthusiasm; acting together such important steps as the withdrawal of Guatemala from the ODECA trap have been taken and fundamental projects have been undertaken by the patriotic Government of Colonel Arbenz, projects which contribute to the independent economic development of Guatemala.

This year, in the face of a recurrence of threats of foreign intervention, tens of thousands of Guatemalans organized and unorganized, of varying political and religious beliefs, have carried out important acts in repudiation of the interventionist pirates and the conspirators.

Experience, clearly indicates that unity of action is the way, but experience also shows that to date the action of the united front has not been enough. A united front should include the workers, the peasants, the small businessmen and industrialists of the country, the progressive farmers and the democratic intellectuals who are united in demanding the resolution of such fundamental questions as the economic development of Guatemala, the improvement of popular welfare, national independence, the maintenance of peace and democratic liberties.

There is already a political alliance among the Guatemalan Labor Party, the PAR, the PRG and the RN; the CGTG and the CNCG also participate in the meetings; but this alliance is not enough; there must be more cohesion and it must be broadened to include the peoples' and mass organizations, on whose foundation a true National Democratic Front can be based, namely a superior organic manifestation of the united front movement, for united action in the defense of a common program.

The feudal-imperialist reactionaries fear the unity of the democratic forces. The Guatemalan Labor Party warns against the danger that the reaction may wish to take advantage of certain existing differences within the democratic parties, but at the same time it expresses its confidence that those differences can be resolved without damaging or weakening the unity of the democratic forces but rather in the interests of unity and the strengthening of that unity.

The united front of the democratic classes and groups is necessary in order to carry forward a common program, a program which looks toward the complete realization of the agrarian reform and the development of agriculture, the protection and development of national industry and the raising of wages, the lowering of the cost of living through application of the resolutions passed by the National Conference on the High Cost of Living, the complete realization of all the fundamental projects in President Arbenz' program, the diversification of foreign commerce, the repossession by the Nation of the public services and national resources in foreign hands, the strengthening of democratic liberties for

the people and the adoption of energetic measures against the activities of traitors and reactionary conspirators, the maintenance of peace and cordial relations with all peoples and States on the basis of reciprocal respect for sovereignty.

WORKERS, PEASANTS, SMALL BUSINESSMEN AND NATIONAL INDUSTRIALISTS, PROGRESSIVE FARMERS, YOUNG PEOPLE AND WOMEN:

All the necessary conditions for the creation of this broad united front exist, a great front in which the efforts of all patriots and revolutionaries are united, on the job, in the locality, the departments and on a national scale, to join in specific and immediate demands for the realization of a program of progress and national independence, welfare and peace. All the conditions exist for the forging of a National Democratic Front which would serve as an instrument of unity for the popular masses in the realization of a common program.

MEN AND WOMEN OF GUATEMALA:

There must be created a great united mass front against imperialism and for national independence, against foreign intervention and for the free progress of our people, against semifeudal and semi-colonial backwardness and for the greater welfare of the people, for democratic liberties and for peace. The people hold their destiny in their hands. We call on you, Guatemalan patriots and revolutionaries to fulfill that destiny!

Guatemala, October 18, 1953

CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE
GUATEMALAN LABOR PARTY